

# NETWORK PROCESSOR/SOFTWARE CONTROL ARCHITECTURE

## Abstract of the Disclosure

The transport protocol for communicating between general purpose processors acting as contact points and network processors in a packet processing environment such as Ethernet is provided. In such an environment, there is at least one single control point processor (CP) and a plurality of network processors (NP), sometimes referred to as blades. A typical system could contain two to sixteen network processors, and each network processor connects to a plurality of devices which communicate with each other over a network transport, such as Ethernet. The CP typically controls the functionality and the functioning of the network processors to function in a way that connects one end user with another, whether or not the end user is on the same network processor or a different network processor. There are three types of communication provided; first, there is communication generally referred to as control services and normally there will be only one pico processor which operates as a GCH (guided cell handler) and only one that operates as a guided tree handler (GTH). A path is provided for the controls to the GCH and the GTH commands, and a separate path is provided for the data frames between the GDH's (general data handler) and the CP.